Dear colleagues,

We hope this email finds you well.

We cordially invite you to our interdisciplinary guest lecture “Monumental Structures” on **Wed. November 16, 2022, 5 -7 pm** (German time) on Zoom.

The format comprises the lectures "**The Tunisian High Steppes: 'Monumental Christian Testimonies'**" by Fathi Bejaoui (Institut national du patrimoine de Tunis) and "**Erecting Walls, Segregating Society in 10th Century Córdoba**" by Felix Arnold (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Madrid).

Please confirm your participation by **November 15, 2022** to romanislam@uni-hamburg.de. You will then receive a link enabling you to access the event.

Kind regards,

Prof. Stefan Heidemann                        Prof. Sabine Panzram

Attachments: Abstracts
"The Tunisian High Steppes: 'Monumental Christian Testimonies'" by Fathi Bejaoui

The region that we designate by the Tunisian “Hautes Steppes” corresponds geographically to central Tunisia and to a large part of the Byzacena and its border with the Proconsularis following the administrative reorganization of the African provinces and the fundamental constitutional reform under the reign of Diocletianus and the tetrarchy (end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century A.D). This tribal region was romanized in the first century after a conflict with the Berber tribes. That was the beginning of sedentarization and the Fondation of the main cities known until now: Ammaedara (Haïdra), Cillium (Kasserine), Sufetula (Sbeitla)… Christianity was precocious there: bishoprics are attested from the middle of the third century. It will be part of the Vandal kingdom from 439 and become a century later, with the Byzantine reconquest (533), a major point in the defensive system of Justinian in Africa. It is from this region and particularly Sufetula (647) that the Arab-Muslim armies from Tripolitania began their conquest of North Africa. The archaeological testimonies concerning this period are the densest of ancient Tunisia and come not only in a monumental aspect (churches with one or two apses, baptisteries, chapels ...) but also take several other forms (funerary epigraphic texts with some examples from the Vandal period wish is rare in Roman Africa, dedications, cult of saints and martyrs, mosaics, ceramics, tiles, sculpture, etc. These testimonies affect both large urban centers and rural areas, one of the originalities of which is the several cases of baptisteries associated to the religious building. It is importantly to note that the most spectacular monuments of this Christian period in the current territory of Tunisia conserved are from the “Hautes Steppes” as we can see it in some cities: Ammaedara/Haïdra or Sufetula/Sbeïtla in which we have a real episcopal complex composed of 2 churches, one baptistery, chapel, residence with private baths reserved to members of clergy. In another bishopric, Thagamuta near Sufetula, a second complex which not only has the same organization but also offers spaces around the apse of one of the churches dedicated to burials of monks covered by funerary mosaics.the mention of “monachus” on African epitaphs is exceptional. Furthermore from an architectural point of view, the churches (urban or rural) have in many examples two apses or two opposite choirs, one of them is reserved for the worship of saints, often with reliquaries (Sufetula, Ammaedara, Thala, Thelepte…). These developments only appear from the byzantine period (sixth century).

Dr. Fatih Bejaoui is a honorary director of research at the National Institute of Heritage of Tunisia and visiting Fellow at the University of Paris IV Sorbonne. He was responsible for the Tunisian archaeological sites of the West Center, and then curator of the Carthage site and his museum. He consacred multiple researchs work about the Christian Iconography (céramics, sarcophagi, mosaic, métal objects etc) and religious architecture. Some publications: Céramique et religion chrétienne(1997), La Tunisie du Centre Ouest(2010) , Basiliques chrétiennes d’Afrique du Nord , Monuments de la Tunisie (2014) avec F. Baratte, Les hautes steppes chrétiennes(2015), Le Gouvernorat de Kasserine,son histoire, ses monuments (2022).
"Erecting Walls, Segregating Society in 10th Century Córdoba"
by Felix Arnold

The cityscape of Islamic Cordoba was characterized by high walls. The great mosque, the caliph's palace (Alcázar), recreational residences of the elite, public buildings of various kinds, the palace city of Madinat al-Zahra: in the 10th century CE they were all surrounded by walls with bastions. At least in Madinat al-Zahra, these walls not only separated the caliph's palace from the residential quarters, but also one living quarter of the city from another. Were these districts home to different groups of society, did the walls even represent a deliberate segregation of society? In this talk, Felix Arnold argues that this very segregation may have been one of root causes of the civil war (fitna) that started in 1009 CE.

Dr. habil. Felix Arnold is an architect and archaeologist working in both Egypt and Spain. Currently he is co-director of an excavation project in Madīnat az‐Zahrā’. He has published widely, including the book "Islamic Palace Architecture in the Western Mediterranean. A History" (Oxford University Press 2017). Since 2021 he is the scientific director of the Madrid department of the German Archaeological Institute.